
Government of the District of Columbia



Metropolitan Police Department

Testimony of
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***“Proposed FY2007 Budget for the
Metropolitan Police Department”***

Committee on the Judiciary
Phil Mendelson, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia

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John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Chairman Mendelson, other members of the Council, staff and guests ... I appreciate the opportunity to present this statement outlining the Metropolitan Police Department's proposed budget for fiscal year 2007. Other members of the Department's staff are with me to assist in responding to your questions. The text of my prepared testimony is posted on the Police Department's website, www.mpdcc.gov.

The MPD's proposed budget for FY07 continues the considerable progress that has been made in recent years and it supports our primary goal of maximizing the resources that are devoted to fighting crime in DC's neighborhoods. The budget will allow our Department to remain at our fully authorized level of 3,800 sworn members. It will also enable us to put even more of those officers in operational assignments through continued funding of our civilianization program. As you know, civilianization allows us to hire civilian staff for some administrative and technical positions currently held by sworn members, thus allowing those sworn members to be reassigned. The budget also supports our critical ongoing needs in the areas of equipment, supplies, fleet and training. In short, at a time when crime in the District of Columbia is at historically low levels, this budget will allow us to maintain and build upon the impressive gains we have made.

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The Department's proposed operating budget for FY07 is approximately \$437 million dollars from all funding sources. This represents an increase of \$56 million dollars from the Department's FY06 budget, though an increase of only \$35 million over the Department's actual expenditures for FY05. Of the \$437 million, approximately \$420 million dollars, or 96 percent, is locally funded. Of our locally funded budget, roughly 84 percent is devoted to personnel services – that is, salaries and benefits for our sworn and civilian employees.

While the proposed increase in our FY07 budget may seem large, it is important to examine the increase in the proper context. As you know, the labor agreement between the Department and the Fraternal Order of Police was concluded and approved last summer. The FY 2007 budget is the first budget to include the effect of that agreement. In my statement last year, I pointed out that the FY2006 budget did not include any portion of the current five-year agreement. The 2007 budget includes a 4 percent retroactive pay increase for FY04, two separate 2 percent pay increases for FY05, and 4 percent pay increases in both FY06 and FY07. The increase in pay also increases the cost of employee benefits, overtime and other pay categories. The cumulative effect of these

increases accounts for the overwhelming majority of the proposed increase in MPD's budget for FY07.

As I mentioned, the proposed budget for "Personal Services" will allow us to maintain our staffing at 3,800 sworn members throughout FY07. This is significant because, up until now, 81 of those officers have been funded through a federal grant from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. That grant is expiring, and to maintain those officers, we have to shift funding for them to local funds in FY07. The proposed budget includes nearly \$4.2 million dollars in local funds to cover this funding shift.

In addition to supporting 3,800 sworn members, the FY07 budget will enable us to put even more of those officers out on the street – in operational assignments in our neighborhoods. Our current civilianization program began at the end of FY05, with the identification of just over 80 administrative and support positions that had been held by sworn police officers, but which could be handled by civilian employees. To date, we have filled 66 of those positions, 11 are in background investigation and six are currently being advertised.

In addition to relieving sworn members of various tasks and responsibilities that could be handled by non-sworn personnel, our civilianization initiative serves another important purpose: it brings into our Department highly skilled employees in such specialty areas as information technology, forensics, and research and policy analysis. These employees are bringing new ideas and fresh perspectives to our agency and its work. The FY07 budget will allow us to complete and maintain this ambitious civilianization effort.

As part of these civilianization positions, I would like to expand our Police Cadet Program, from 9 to 30 cadets. Police cadets are recent high school graduates who are employed by the Department in civilian positions. Working about 20 hours a week, the cadets rotate through a variety of assignments – helping the MPD fulfill our mission, while providing the cadets with valuable exposure and experience within the Department. In addition to paying the cadets for their work, the MPD covers their tuition at the University of the District of Columbia. Cadets convert to career police status upon completion of their Associate Degree program and enter recruit training to become a sworn officer.

Expanding the Cadet Program will not only increase the pool of talented recruit officers from DC who are available to our agency in the coming years. Expansion will also mean that even more District youth will benefit from access to employment opportunities, secondary education and a career in public service. We believe this is truly a win-win opportunity, and an important investment for the city and the Department.

Finally, the Mayor's budget proposal may allow for the expansion of our Crossing Guard program as well. The Budget Support Act includes language that would direct funds to various agency budgets, should additional revenue become available. For the MPD, that could mean extra money to hire, train and equip more crossing guards.

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After personal services, the second largest category of cost increases is from fixed costs. Much of the increase in our fixed costs is due to the rising cost of energy. This impacts electricity, natural gas, gasoline and steam costs. In addition, our rent expenditures are also expected to increase in FY07, as we expand into a new property and evidence warehouse and enhance services in Ward 8 with a planned new substation in the Seventh Police District.

The MPD is subject to many of the same economic pressures as District residents are. For example, as health care costs in general have risen, we have had to increase our budget for the Police and Fire Clinic by just over \$1 million dollars. As the city's occupational healthcare contractor for public safety personnel, the PFC provides a range of services to our members. These include pre-employment examination and testing of the more than 1,000 applicants for police officer positions each year, as well as a variety of wellness services to public safety personnel, including flu shots, tuberculosis screening, smoking cessation and other wellness programs.

In addition, PFC provides comprehensive return-to-work and rehabilitation services for police officers and firefighters who have been injured in the line of duty, ensuring that they are returned to work as quickly as medically possible. As I reported in our recent performance hearing, we have cut in half the percentage of officers unavailable for full duty because of extended sick leave or other factors. This improvement has largely been the result of new protocols to monitor and evaluate sick leave and limited duty status, as well as better management of these cases by our Office of Human

Services, in coordination with the PFC. Overall, the services provided by PFC help to improve the health and wellness of our members, and therefore maximize the availability of police officers.

A relatively modest change in our budget is the result of a significant addition to our capabilities. This year, the Department will take delivery of a second helicopter. The purchase of this helicopter was completely funded through state Homeland Security resources. The addition of a second helicopter will significantly expand our ability to support focused law enforcement efforts on the ground, monitor large demonstrations and respond to calls for assistance from our federal partners. In order to support the operations of the second helicopter, the budget of our Air Support Unit has been increased by approximately \$375,000 dollars.

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Finally, I want to briefly address the issue of the number of sworn members in the MPD and whether we need to add more. There has been a fair amount of discussion on this topic in recent weeks, and I have been variously quoted as saying that either a) we don't need any additional officers or b) we do need a few hundred more officers. Allow me to try and clarify. As I mentioned earlier, our Department has finally reached our authorized level of 3,800 sworn members, and the FY07 budget will enable us to stay at the level. That is a significant accomplishment. Also significant is the progress of our ongoing civilianization program, as well as other efforts to put more officers on the street – for example, by reducing the number of officers on extended sick leave or limited duty and be meeting the staffing goals set by the Mayor and the Council.

The members of this Department have accomplished a great deal over the last few years. They were able to do so, in part because of additional resources, better management and improved information, as well as their own hard work, initiative and professionalism. To accomplish even more, our Department could benefit from some additional sworn personnel, provided that any expansion plan is designed in a thoughtful and efficient manner.

The fact of the matter is that it took us some time to move from fewer than 3,600 officers up to the current level of 3,800. Given the competition for law enforcement applicants in our region and throughout the country, and given the high standards we have set for becoming a member of the MPDC, it would be unrealistic to budget for, and expect, an instantaneous increase in the number of officers. I think all of us – the Mayor's Office, the Council and the MPD – need to sit down and

work collectively on trying to determine an optimum number of officers and a plan for getting us there. In the meantime, I remain very confident that our Department can continue to have a positive impact on crime and neighborhood safety with 3,800 sworn members, supported by our team of civilian employees.

In closing, let me reaffirm my belief that the FY07 budget, as proposed, funds the most pressing priorities of our Department. The budget supports our current officer staffing level and it helps to ensure that more of those officers are where they need to be – out in our neighborhoods. The budget supports our continuing efforts in both neighborhood crime fighting and homeland security. In short, the proposed FY07 budget provides the resources – both personnel and support systems – that are needed to reduce crime even further and to promote a greater sense of safety and security in DC neighborhoods.

I thank you again for the opportunity to read this statement into the record. My staff and I will be happy to address your questions.